presidential campaign and after President George W. Bush entered office on 20th January. Prime Minister and President Bush have been in contact with each other. Principal Secretary to Prime Minister and the National Security Advisor met the U.S. Defence Secretary Mr. Donald Rumsfeld in Munich on 3rd February, 2001. Our Ambassador in Washington has also had a productive meeting with ilie U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell.

(c) President Bush has expressed a desire to foster a stronger and mutually beneficial relationship between the two countries. The U.S. Secretary of State and the National Security Advisor to the U.S. President have also indicated that the U.S. would continue to broaden their engagement and develop closer relations with India.

Both sides agree that there is potential for increased cooperation between the two countries and share a desire for an early resumption of dialogue across the entire spectrum of bilateral ties.

**Indo-China border dispute**

168. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of meetings of the Indo-China Joint Working Group on Boundary question held so far to solve the border dispute between the two countries;

(b) the results achieved so far through these meetings; and

(c) the issues which are yet to be resolved alongwith the details thereof and the view of both the countries thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) The India-China Joint Working Group on the Boundary Question has met twelve times.

(b) and (c) India and China seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question through peaceful consultations. We signed an agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control in **the** India-China

Border Areas in 1993 and a second agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas in 1996. These two Agreements provide an institutional framework for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the border areas. Both sides have also agreed to expedite the process of LAC clarification. As part of this exercise, maps of each other's perceptions of the LAC in the Middle Sector were exchanged at the Eighth meeting of the Expert Croup held in Beijing in November, 2000.

**Haj Pilgrims Quota for Andhra Pradesh**

169. DR.DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the quota of Haj Pilgrims for Andhra Pradesh during the last five years, year-wise;

(b) whether it was according to the proportion of Muslim population of the State;

(c) if not, whether Government propose to increase the Haj Pilgrims quota of the State for the current calendar year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) The quota of the Haj Pilgrims for Andhra Pradesh during the last five years, year-wise, is as under:—

| Year | Original Quota |
|---|---|
| 1996 | 2,702 |
| 1997 | 3,037 |
| 1998 | 3,037 |
| 1999 | 3,571 |
| 2000 | 3,571 |

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.